organisational structure, procedures, training, design, technology etc. necessary instructions have been issued to the agencies/Departments concerned to take suitable action on the recommendations of the Committee. About 55 out of 84 recommendations have been implemented so far.

Hijacking of Japanese Vessel by Pirates

4726. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether hijacking of Japanese vessel carrying thousand tonnes of crude oil from Malaysia to Haldia in West Bengal by sea pirates at Malakka Jaldamrumadhya in West Bengal has been reported in some newspapers on 4th March, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whetehr the sea pirates of Mallakka Jaldamrumadhya area are hijacking the foreign vessels in the area on regular basis in connivance of Coastal Guards of Indian Navy;

(d) whether Government propose to take action in order to check rising terrorism of pirates in Indian Ocean;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (f) Government is aware of the news & item captioned "Ship for Haldia vanishes at sea" that appeared in the Telegraph dated 4th March, 2000. The place Mallakka Jalamrumadhya indicated in the Question is not located in West Bengal, but is a strait between Indonesia and Malaysia leading to Singapore. The Indian Coast Guard (CG) was first informed of the vessel MT Global Mars not having reached its destination by the Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) Kuala Lumpur on the 29th February, 2000. The said vessel had departed Port Kelang in malaysia on 22nd February, 2000 for Haldia with 6000 MT of Palm oil products and it was presumed to have been hijacked. On receipt of the information, CG ships and aircraft were alerated to keep sharp look out for the said vessel while on routine surveillance in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone.

The 17 crew members of the missing ship were, subsequently rescued by a fishing boat off the west coast of Thailand on 10th March, 2000. The rescued

crew informed the Police authorities in Thailand that the vessel was hijacked on 24th February, 2000 by about 20 masked and armed pirates.

The Coast Guard and the Navy; have, individually and jointly, been conducting regular patrolling of maritime zone to prevent incidents of theft/ robbery. There is no absolutely evidence whatsoever of their connivance with sea pirates.

Illegal Construction in Meerut cantonment Area

4727. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 333 given in the Rajya Sabha on 2nd December, 1998 and state:

(a) whether defence land comprising Survey No. 357/1751/2, known as 173-B Abulane, Merrut Cantt. is being sold in parts in violation of land policy of GOI and Rule 15 of Cantonment Land Administration Rules, 1937;

(b) whether large scale illegal construction has taken place on vacant land inconnivance with Merrut Cantt. Board Authorities;

(c) whether it is a fact that Board have mutated the names of illegal purchaser of such parts of land *vide* Resolution No. 264 dated 3rd October, 1996;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and corrective action taken thereon; and

(e) the justification for mutating the names of illegal purchasers?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The land in question is an Old Grant property. The holders of occupancy rights of this land have sold parts of the land in the past without the permission of the Government.

(b) Certain unauthorised constructions had been carried out by the holders of occupancy rights of the aforementioned land as well as the purchasers of parts of the land. Action to stop/remove the unauthorised constructions was initiated by the Cantonment Board. However, the parties have approached various courts and the matter is subjudice. No connivance of the Cantt. Board staff in the unauthorised constructions has, however, come to notice.

(c) to (e) The mutation carried out by the Cantt. Board has not been accepted by the Government.